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A

PROTEST

AGAINST

T. PAINE's "*Rights of Man*:"

ADDRESSED TO THE

MEMBERS

OF A

BOOK SOCIETY,

IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE

VOTE OF THEIR COMMITTEE FOR INCLUDING THE ABOVE
WORK IN A LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS RESOLVED
TO BE PURCHASED FOR THE USE OF THE SOCIETY.

"HAVOCK AND SPOIL AND RUIN ARE MY GAIN," MILTON,

PRINTED BY ORDER OF

THE SOCIETY FOR PRESERVING LIBERTY AND PRO-
PERTY AGAINST REPUBLICANS AND LEVELLERS,

HELD AT THE

CROWN AND ANCHOR TAVERN STRAND,

L O N D O N.

AND SOLD AT THE EUROPEAN MAGAZINE WAREHOUSE, IN COWPER'S
COURT, CORNHILL; MR. DEBRETT, PICCADILLY; AND
MESSRS. HOOKHAM AND CARPENTER, BOND-STREET; WHERE
THE SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS MAY IN FUTURE BE
HAD.

M,DCC,XCII.

[PRICE TWO-PENCE.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN a populous Village in this Kingdom a considerable number of
the Inhabitants have formed themselves into a BOOK SOCIETY,
whereof a Committee is annually chosen for the purpose of selecting
such Books as they may think proper to be circulated among the So-
ciety at large. At a Meeting of this Committee one of the Members
thereof

thereof proposed the publication entitled "RIGHTS OF MAN." Another Member resisted strenuously the choice of a Book, which he considered as an insidious address, under a fictitious and ensnaring title, to weak heads and to bad hearts; as replete with indecency and scurrility, and as dictated by a desire of involving a free and happy Country in confusion and ruin. Being, however, unsuccessful in his opposition, and being also unwilling that the Society should suppose him to have concurred in submitting such a Book to their perusal, he felt it due to himself to PROTEST against the Vote which he had in vain endeavoured to prevent, and to assign at large the reasons on which such PROTEST was founded. These reasons, deduced from the obvious design and tendency of the work in question, are detailed in the following sheets, and appear in their original and genuine form of an Address to the Society. And he flatters himself, that his conduct on this occasion will be found to contain an useful moral, deserving the attention of those, who in similar situations, and with similar sentiments and dispositions, *suffer their regard for the public welfare to be surprised into inactivity and supineness, or vanquished by a dread of appearing singular.*

It is but justice to add, that nothing is further from the design of the Writer of this PROTEST than to insinuate, that the rest of the Committee were induced to vote for the Book in question from any approbation of its contents. He knows that they held the doctrines and the designs of MR. PAINE in abhorrence; but zealously, and indeed laudably attached to a principle of free discussion, and fearful of even appearing hostile to the exercise of a right so essential to the existence of social Liberty, they suffered themselves (perhaps incautiously, but with the best intentions) to promote the circulation of a work which endeavours to convert the invaluable privilege of a free Press into an instrument of destruction to the State.

In the Advertisement to the Second Part of "The Rights of Man," the vain Author makes his boast of the extensive and numerous distribution of the copies of the First Part, and he seems to infer from thence that the sense of the Public is in his favour. How erroneous is such an inference! A book so remarkably distinguished for wild extravagance, consummate audacity, and daring insolence, as "The Rights of Man," could not fail to engage a certain degree of public attention, upon the same principle that the exhibition of a monstrous animal production will excite notice and attract gazers in proportion to the hideous deformity of the spectacle. But those who judge of the merit of a book from its progress into notoriety, will frequently find themselves mistaken. Indeed it is not unusual for the merit and the circulation to be in an inverse proportion to each other. The "PARADISE LOST" rose by very slow degrees into notice; but publications that inflame the passions, the lascivious account of a Trial for *Crim. Con.* or an incendiary production exciting to public disorder, are almost sure to throng the Bookseller's shop with eager enquirers. At length, however, distributive Justice is sure to prevail. The work of Merit, rising by degrees into estimation, survives the age in which it first appears, and conveys the author's fame to the latest posterity; while the coarse, malignant, and inflammatory stuff, despised from the first by the wise and good, sinks
much

much more rapidly into oblivion, which, with regard to such productions, is happily

“ A bourn from which no traveller returns.”

MR. PAINE, however, most ungratefully omits to acknowledge the patronage of those benevolent coadjutors in the same cause, whose liberality and exertions have chiefly contributed to the boasted multiplication of his copies, and who, by generous and pressing donations, have procured the acceptance thereof by numbers who could never have been persuaded to make the acquisition on any other terms. Unfortunately, this gratuitous mode of distribution is apt to suggest an idea, that what is so dispensed is of very insignificant value (like the benediction in the Fable, which was bestowed after the smallest pecuniary donation had been withheld); and an idea of this sort is a prodigious check to the perusal of a book so acquired: the generous circulation therefore of the far greater part of our Author's copies is probably of *immediate* convenience in divers retail branches of trade. But although for these reasons the distribution of Mr. PAINE's writings be a very fallacious criterion of the number of his readers, one thing is clear, that, be that number great or small, the generality of them would be highly gratified by seeing his pamphlets *lighted* into proper notice, and the Author himself *elevated* to a station of distinguished eminence, in the midst of surrounding and exulting multitudes.

There seems to be but very little occasion to travel out of the “ Rights of Man” in order to ascertain the real motives of the Author; and an Englishman must have a wonderful propensity to confound his friends and his foes, who does not discover in that work a steady and deliberate plan to sap and undermine the happiness and prosperity of Great Britain. But in order to be thoroughly acquainted with a man's sentiments and views, it is useful to trace his language and his conduct through different periods, and to render him thereby explanatory of himself. If we apply this rule to Mr. PAINE, it will appear, that he has not only been long actuated by, but that he formerly gloried in avowing, an implacable animosity and rooted hatred to this country; and *that* not merely to its Government, but to its interests, its welfare, its national character, its national honour, its commercial and naval greatness. It is well known, that, born a British subject, but destitute of those qualities which are calculated to attract esteem and command success in this country, he conveyed himself, without the assistance of legal interposition, to America, about the commencement of our dispute with the Colonies. The character he took with him was not calculated to advance him above a very low station, in which he first appeared; but the marked malevolence he testified against his native land could not fail to be grateful to his new connections, who were then in that situation which renders the Treason acceptable, even though the Traitor be detected. Thus, in violation of his natural allegiance, he strained every nerve to encrease the animosity then subsisting between the Mother-country and her Colonies, and to prevent any accommodation from taking place. His pen was constantly employed during the war in widening the breach which all good Englishmen sincerely deplored, and in promoting that

separation between England and America, which was then considered as an event the most fatal that could possibly happen to the former Country*. Had Experience realized this apprehension,—had the loss of America been attended with ruin to the greatness and prosperity of England—had the Sun of Britain's Glory then indeed "set for ever,"—we should probably have seen no more of Mr. THOMAS PAINE, except he had paid us a cursory visit to insult our distress, and to glut his malice with a view of our calamity; and finding us sufficiently miserable, his satisfaction had been complete, and the "Rights of Man" would have been unknown for ever, unless, in pursuit of the only repose congenial to his disposition, the Author had accommodated that work to disturb the felicity of some happier clime, or to lessen, if possible, the general sum of human happiness.

* By a pamphlet entitled "COMMON SENSE," and by an occasional paper styled "THE CRISIS," he laboured during the war to fan the flame of discord, and to indispose the Americans from again recognising Englishmen as brethren; and in a Letter to the Abbé Raynal, written after the Independence of America had been acknowledged, he still displayed the same deep-rooted and invincible enmity to Great Britain. A few extracts from these writings will serve materially to explain his motives in wishing so anxiously to meddle with our concerns.—In his COMMON SENSE he says, "Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, still hoping for the best; and are apt to call out, 'Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this. But let us examine the passions and feelings of mankind; bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land.'" Page 38.

"To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly.—The last cord is now broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the Continent of America forgive THE MURDERERS of BRITAIN. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings to good and wise purposes." Page 52.

So several years after, in his "Letter to the Abbé Raynal," he shews that the same enmity to Great Britain still rankled in his breast; and that it was founded not in any sense of injury, but in a detestation of the qualities of the English people. Thus he says, "If we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find every thing which ought to make a nation blush; the most vulgar abuse accompanied by that species of haughtiness which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a gentleman. It was equally from her manners as from her injustice that she lost her colonies." Page 8.

So after expatiating upon "that greatness of character, and that superiority of heart which had marked the conduct of France in her conquests," upon "the rival eminence of the confederates, and the lenity of America," he says, "It is England only who has been insolent and cruel."—And again, "A mind habituated to meanness and injustice commits them without reflection." Page 52.—And again, "From Holland, she (Britain) expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted in a number of instances during the present war in the same character herself. To be allied to, or connected with Britain, seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Make Holland and America her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them." P. 54.—"A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind." Page 56.—"It may be clearly seen, that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy; and that SHE IS ABLE TO BE AS SUPERIOR TO ENGLAND IN THE EXTENT OF A NAVY, AS SHE IS IN THE EXTENT OF HER REVENUES AND HER POPULATION; and England may lament the day, when by her insolence and injustice she provoked in France a maritime disposition." Page 64.—He then throws out some hints for the demo-

But the unexpected, the unexampled, the daily-increasing prosperity of Great Britain, the harmony, the loyalty, and the happiness of its inhabitants, furnished a disappointment too severe to be endured with any degree of composure. These were scenes which harrowed up the soul of the envious and malignant *Fiend*, who, like his *progenitor*, bent his course to this Paradise of the globe, eager to destroy that felicity which it was not in his nature either to partake of or endure.

It is difficult, under any circumstances, to find pity for those, whose character, conduct, and designs, merit only execration; and yet one can hardly refuse to commiserate the extreme severity of their disappointment, who build their hopes upon the success of these fictitious "*Rights of Man*" in this country. That success has been exactly such as was merited, and as might reasonably have been expected. Indignation at the design, detestation of the Author's character, and contempt for his performance, constitute the public sentiment upon this occasion.—And at length JUSTICE, with slow but steady pace, seems advancing to gratify the universal wish, by vindicating the insulted dignity of the country.

The good sense of the English People is no more to be deluded by artifice than their vigour is to be vanquished by force. They are not to be persuaded to part with the substance for the shadow. They can distinguish between the sincere and honest advice of rational friends, and the wily ensnaring addresses of insidious foes. They can detect treachery, and defeat malice. They are not so short-sighted as to believe, that in 1792 the man would counsel them to their good, who a few years before was labouring at their destruction. And sensible that under the friendly influence of their most excellent Constitution, and of the happiest possible form of Government, they not only enjoy the greatest degree of personal freedom, as well as of personal security, that can exist in society, but have also risen, within the short space of eight years, from penury to affluence, and from deep and accumulated distress to great and unexampled prosperity; rejoiced also that the fruits of these great and manifold advantages have already begun to appear in an alleviation of their burthens, they are not to be induced to stop the career of their greatness, and to replunge into a state of confusion and calamity worse even than that from which they have so happily emerged,

A P R O T E S T, &c.

Addressed to the Members of a Book Society.

HAVING been unsuccessful in my endeavours, as a Member of your Committee, to prevent the introduction of Mr. Paine's "*Rights of Man*" into the Society, I consider it as due to myself, as well as a proper mark of respect to the Society at large, thus to

enter my Protest against the Vote by which it was resolved to present that book to your inspection. My wish is, to obviate the supposition that I concurred in such a resolution; but, lest I should be thought to object on trivial grounds, I feel it incumbent upon me to assign at large the reasons upon which my Protest is founded.

In the first place, I cannot reconcile it to *my own* feelings to contribute in *any* degree to the circulation of a work, the palpable design of which is to disturb the tranquillity and invade the happiness of the State; and which appears to be solely intended to excite disaffection towards Government, to stimulate the people to sedition and rebellion, and to involve this free and happy country in scenes of confusion and anarchy.

I should also consider myself as guilty of an insult upon *your* feelings, were I to put into your hands a work containing a most indecent and malignant attack upon that CONSTITUTION which is deservedly your pride and boast as Britons, and which preserves inviolate your rights and privileges as free citizens; a Constitution obtained by the glorious struggles of your ancestors—founded upon experience—matured by time—which has stood the test of ages—the essence of which is social liberty—the scope of which is social happiness;—in short, a Constitution which you enjoy as your inestimable birth-right, which calls for your gratitude to its venerable founders, and which it is your bounden duty to transmit unimpaired to posterity.

If a book of which the tendency is generally admitted to be immoral and dissolute, were proposed in your Society, every Member of it would spurn at the idea of its being submitted to your notice. And can any publication be in effect more grossly or destructively vicious and immoral, than one which tempts to a violation of the important duties of subjects—which tends to disturb the public order—to weaken or dissolve the bands which, by connecting Government and People, keep Society together—to withdraw that respect to the ruling powers which is prescribed both by reason and religion—to diminish the authority of the laws, and thereby to remove the restraints which are necessary to controul the passions of mankind—and finally, to sacrifice domestic tranquillity and national prosperity for intestine commotions and civil discord?

If a plan were published for the purpose of instructing and encouraging evil-disposed persons to set fire to the habitations of individuals, who would assist in the propagation of so detestable a scheme? Shall we favour then the attempts, shall we patronize or encourage the efforts of an incendiary, who aims at the conflagration of that noble and valuable edifice the common and comfortable dwelling of us all, while under its friendly and hospitable roof we participate with harmony and affection the transcendent enjoyments of a firmly-united and a well-regulated family?

While, however, I decline to take a part in disseminating sedition and treason, I am a real friend to fair and candid discussion, which, instead of being hostile, must always prove favourable to the British Constitution. But the disquisitions of Mr. Paine are by no means of this description. Under the mask of discussion, they really point to action, and that of the most pernicious and criminal nature—they lead

lead not to any practicable good, but to turbulence and general commotion. If they were to have their desired effect, the Constitution would be annihilated; our lives, our liberties, and our property, would be deprived of legal protection; Government would be overturned; and in vain might we look into the darksome void of futurity to catch even a faint and dubious glimpse of security against unbridled licentiousness and unrestrained violence.

It may be said, perhaps, that if Mr. Paine's doctrines be not founded in reason, their being propagated will but expose them to refutation; but who would distribute poison for the sake of the antidote? Such doctrines, although fallacious and sophistical in the extreme, nay, although in a great measure they carry their own refutation along with them, may, nevertheless, among persons of particular descriptions, and on whom they are chiefly designed to operate, produce the most mischievous impressions. They are not, indeed, calculated to produce this effect upon strong, experienced, and well-informed minds; they are framed for the meridian of those understandings which are not accustomed to weigh and to discriminate; and which are ever ready, from indolence, weakness, or inexperience, to receive such impressions.

These disquisitions are also adapted to operate upon the restlessness inherent in man; and they proceed upon the ungenerous principle, that human nature is a fertile soil for the cultivation of discontent. But more especially do they seem to be prompted by the base consideration, that it is easy to infuse dissatisfaction into the minds of those who occupy the lower stations in Society, and that it requires but little address or ingenuity to inspire such persons with disgust and envy, and to convince them that the gradation of rank, which is indispensable to order, and founded indeed in nature, is an infringement on their rights. Schemes of unattainable equality cannot fail to be grateful to those who have but a very small portion of the goods of fortune, who are easily led to believe that the disparity which is inseparable from the nature of Society, is an evil and an injustice to which they ought not to submit. Instead of promoting contentment and cheerful industry, so beneficial to the individual and the community—instead of pointing out the advantages which are peculiar to each station, and which prove, that, notwithstanding an apparent inequality, the balance is poised with impartial justice—instead of displaying virtue as the only source of real felicity, it is the object of the modern "Rights of Man" to create restlessness and dissatisfaction, and to persuade mankind, that they suffer injuries which they do not perceive, that they sustain hardships which they do not feel, that their comforts are visionary and their happiness mere delusion; in short, these doctrines find men happy, prevail on them to believe that they are not so, and in the end render them miserable.

Such attempts are, indeed, not more pernicious than absurd—not more destructive of the general good than unfriendly to the real interests of those whose welfare they artfully profess to have in view: for by endeavouring to remove a due subordination, and to create contention between the several Orders of which Society is composed, they

tend to destroy the harmony and co-operation of the whole, and to produce evils which would fall heaviest on the lowest classes, which have the fewest resources, and are unavoidably the most dependant. It would be just as rational to attempt to persuade the Feet, that considering their importance and utility, they ought not to submit to those offices which are assigned them—that it is a hardship and an injustice for them to be obliged to wade through the dirt, and to bear the weight of the whole body—that they are entitled to some nobler capacity, some more elevated station—that having nerves as well as the Head (the pretended seat of intelligence), their opinions ought to be taken, their will consulted, and themselves admitted into the council; and that they ought, in maintenance of their rights, to rebel against the subsisting inequality of arrangement, and refuse to perform their accustomed works of drudgery.

But absurd as these doctrines really are, that absurdity is, for the reason I have mentioned, no sufficient security against their progress. It is therefore rendering Society a service to detect and expose their fallacy—to point out the wicked intent from which they proceed, and the mischievous, nay ruinous consequences to which they tend. To do this, is to consult not merely the welfare of the present age, but that also of posterity. For it is a favourite object with the abettors of these delusive systems of pretended rights, to poison the tender minds of generous and unsuspecting youth—to take the judgment by surprise—to warp the reason while it is in its progress towards maturity—and to imprint injurious impressions at a period when they are most likely to be rendered indelible. By such means it is endeavoured to lay a foundation for disturbances in future generations, in case the present age, under the influence of good education and good habits, should be so fortunate as to defeat the machinations of sedition.

But, in addition to all these considerations, it is to be remembered, that the doctrines I allude to are particularly intended to unite and call into action the unprincipled and turbulent part of mankind, the common pests of Society, who are ever ready to second any attempts which lead to tumult and disorder. Desperate, ambitious, and malignant, their views are promoted, or their feelings gratified, by scenes of riot and confusion, and they depend for their harvest upon the convulsions of kingdoms and empires. Men of this description dislike nothing so much as the restraints of law and decorum. Their wishes are thwarted by the controul of any Government which has vigour enough to protect the good from the attacks of the bad, to repel the incursions of violence and licentiousness, and to keep Society together in a firm and compact band of union. Such persons, who from the nature of their dispositions and pursuits are abundantly more watchful and active than the friends of Order, are obliged to anybody who will furnish them with a shadow of a pretext for raising a clamour against imaginary defects in any part of the existing Government: they flock to a Declaration of absurd, fictitious, and impracticable Rights, as to a Manifesto of Rebellion or a Standard of Revolt—happy in an occasion to blow the flame which may catch all that is combustible in a State—thrice happy to find

find a head, whether a TYLER, a CADE, or a CATILINE, who may lead them to the attack, or may give consistence and effect to their conspiracies.

Thus, upon the whole, are the modern "Rights of Man" intended to take advantage of all that is weak and of all that is wicked in Society; of the failings and the vices, of the worst passions and the basest propensities of mankind: thus are they designed to collect into a focus the turbulent and the disaffected: they tend to embitter the labourer's toil, and to infuse the poison of discontent into his invigorating draughts, which were wont to support him cheerfully under his fatigues: and, adapted by their coarse and superficial reasonings to minds entirely uncultivated, which are unused to the detection of fallacy, and unable to trace causes to effects, they form a catechism of sedition and disloyalty for the lower orders of the people.

These are the considerations which have made me so eagerly oppose the circulation of a work which in so many ways tends to produce the most pernicious effects. I admit indeed that its impression is not likely to be general, because, fortunately, it is not so easy a matter as these incendiaries vainly suppose, to induce a Nation to part with substantial felicity and rational freedom: their nefarious attempts, however, keep Society in a state of ferment and agitation, give uneasiness to the virtuous and well-disposed, and tend to weaken the beneficial energies of Government. Instead, therefore, of being encouraged in any degree, they ought, by all possible means, to be discountenanced by all real friends to their country; and if we cannot wholly prevent the mischievous industry with which such doctrines are propagated, we ought at least, on our part, to be equally diligent in endeavouring to counteract its effects. *Why should a good cause inspire less vigour or less activity than a bad one? Why should the adherents of the Constitution be less zealous than its foes? Why should the well-disposed be less vigilant, or less animated, than those of a contrary description? The strongest fortress must fall, if the garrison, supinely depending upon the strength of the walls, neglect to repel the assailants.* It ought not to satisfy the minds of good citizens, to leave to Government the whole task of preserving the public tranquillity. It is on every account to be desired, that the extraordinary interposition of the public force for the maintenance of order should be but seldom resorted to. The necessity of such interference would be generally prevented, if individuals were to exert themselves within the sphere of their influence, and endeavour to check causes instead of waiting for effects; if they would overawe and discourage the common disturbers of society by a marked detestation of their characters, and by a steady and unremitting watchfulness of their measures and designs. The odium attached to vice furnishes perhaps a more general check to its progress than even the penalties of the law.

To explain more particularly the general reasoning which I have already urged, we need only appeal shortly to some few passages of Mr. Paine's work.

Mr. Paine, in both the First and Second Parts of his RIGHTS OF MAN, begins, very judiciously, with preparing the way for that

system of destruction which it is the object of both to introduce. The grand obstacles in the way of his designs are **LAWS** and **GOVERNMENT**; it was therefore very necessary, as a preparatory step, to weaken these impediments, by withdrawing or diminishing as much as possible the respect which mankind usually possess for such institutions. Accordingly, in the commencement of his First Part, our Author endeavours to establish, as a fundamental principle, that the present age or generation is not at all bound by any act of preceding times, and that all laws and institutions heretofore made and established are now destitute of all binding authority. This, it must be owned, is no injudicious step in pursuit of his grand object; for if he could but get rid of the authority of all social regulations which have not been actually introduced in the present day, very little would remain to check the progress of his wishes and undertakings. Such reasoning is, however, the most absurd and nonsensical that ever came from the pen of any writer. Mankind is not really susceptible of any such division as that of ages and generations. The transactions of the world are, indeed, for the sake of convenience and historical precision, classed under certain periodical denominations of time; but the race of men, like a stream, is perpetually running off and perpetually supplied afresh; its continuity is preserved unbroken, from year to year, and from century to century. There is no point, line, or boundary, at which one generation can be said to terminate and another commence: at every moment some are commencing the career of existence, while others are going off the course. This uninterrupted chain of human existence preserves a correspondent connection in human affairs. Society is thus held constantly together, and knows nothing, in its aggregate capacity, of that mortality which is the attribute of the individuals who compose it. Of course the obligation of the *laws* by which Society is regulated, is necessarily as uniform as the existence of Society itself: neither the death of the Legislator nor of his contemporaries can dissolve or weaken their force. The Laws are not made to bind any particular set of individuals, but the community at large, of whomsoever it may be composed. We are born under subjection to them, as well as under their protection. The legislative authority exercised a hundred years ago is of precisely the same force with regard to ourselves as that exercised yesterday; and the Laws made in our own time are in no sense more compulsory than the subsisting Laws enacted by our forefathers. The latter are even rendered more venerable by their antiquity. No Legislature can indeed infringe upon the powers of a subsequent one. There always exists the same right to repeal, as well as the same obligation to obey, till that right be properly exercised. Society is at every period of time possessed of the same powers, and its right to annul a law of the last year, or of the last century, stands exactly upon the same ground. Thus while the continued obligation of the Laws, till regularly repealed by the supreme authority, is necessary to the order, the harmony, and indeed the existence of a State; the right existing equally at all times to abrogate and to alter as well as to enact, preserves the constant independence of Society, and renders it at all times equally free. It is therefore the grossest sophistry in Mr. Paine

to contend, that the authority of the Parliament of 1688, or of any prior Parliament, is superseded by lapse of time. We continue to recognize such authority; we continue thereby to reap the fruits of the wisdom then exercised; and we are, nevertheless, as free and as independent as the people of that age. So the authority of modern Parliaments will, in like manner, be binding upon Posterity, without encroaching upon its freedom. — So much for Mr. Paine's endeavour to undermine the authority of the Laws.

A second grand object of this Writer is to persuade mankind, that Government itself is almost useless and unnecessary. Accordingly he tells us, in Part II. page 8, that "Government is no farther necessary than to supply the few cases to which society and civilization are not conveniently competent:" that "The abolition of any formal Government, far from being the dissolution of society, brings it closer together: that "Formal Government makes but a small part of civilized life; and, whenever the best that human wisdom can desire is established, it is a thing more in name and in idea than in fact:" and page 10, that "It is but few general laws that civilized life requires, and those of such common usefulness, that whether they are enforced by the form of Government or not, the effect will be the same*."

But surely it is not possible that such trash (which I have only quoted in order to point out the cloven foot, and expose the design and the extent of our author's doctrines) can raise a film before the understanding, and obscure the real, the efficient, the universal operation of Government, as maintaining the union of Society, and affording to each individual the only possible source of protection, in all the relations and in all the situations in which he can be supposed to exist.

Society is a state where the compulsory obligation of laws is interposed to guard the enjoyment of those rights which are properly recognized and defined, from passion, violence, and injustice. It is plain, that these laws cannot be made and enforced without some adequate authority. And what is that authority but government? which, as it superintends the whole, and every part, is necessarily supreme. In what condition, in what occupation, in what retirement, is not the agency of this power to be traced? And what can possibly be substituted in its place? It is the only source of all protection and of all security, and alone enables us to enjoy the gifts of fortune and the fruits of industry. It does not indeed furnish the vegetative principle by which the corn grows, nor does it bestow the genial warmth that matures the fruit of the vineyard; but it extends its guardian care over the swelling ear and the ripening cluster; it protects the labours of the husbandman, and defends the harvest and the vintage from rapine and depredation.

The doctrine of Mr. Paine, that Government is of very limited importance and utility, is confuted not only by the plainest dictates

* The example of the American States, during the war, is quoted, in order to prove that Society can exist without Government. But in a time of civil war, when a country is covered with armies, though its government be in a manner suspended, for *inter arma silent leges*, yet the very state of hostilities compresses the people into compactness and subordination, and the civil government is only merged in the necessarily more vigorous and more unlimited controul of military power.

of common sense, but also by the daily experience of common life. Do we not find that every inferior association of mankind calls of necessity for some connecting and controuling authority? By what other means are the domestic concerns of a private family (the most natural type, and perhaps the original foundation of society at large) to be preserved from confusion and ruin? What a scene would the application of equalizing principles produce in a domestic establishment? Do not the common interests of every parish require the management, direction, and contrôl, of a government within itself? Nay (to descend to instances almost below the gravity and importance of the subject), will our author assert, that in the highest state of exhilaration which he ever experienced in those fashionable convivial meetings (commonly denominated Clubs), he ever proposed to his free and animated associates to relieve themselves from the irksome authority of the chair? Ten or twenty equals, assimilated by their dispositions and habits, cannot assemble for any particular purpose, and scarcely to eat and drink together, without a President, Chairman, or Head, to preserve order and decorum. But, if we are to credit the wonderful discoveries of Modern Philosophy, ten or twenty millions of all ranks, habits, and dispositions, associated for the protection of unnumbered complex interests, and for the preservation of multifarious rights, have but little occasion for such assistance; and with them the best Government "that human wisdom can devise, is a thing more in name and idea than in fact !!!"

Mr. Paine himself, however, seems to consider this ground as so desperate that he soon quits it, and commences his attack in a different manner. He seems to recollect that the world in general are not only convinced of the necessity of some Government, but that it is essential to the happiness of any country, that the functions of Government should be exercised according to certain established forms and rules; which, without crippling its operation, and depriving it of its essential energy, may furnish powerful checks against the exertion of its powers for the purposes of oppression. These checks have hitherto been supposed to exist in the greatest perfection in that separation of office, in that distribution of privilege and function, which have rendered the British Constitution the source of freedom, of felicity, and of glory, to this country—the envy of the rest of the world, and the master-piece to which all rational friends of Liberty throughout the globe look up, as to a matchless model for imitation. Mr. Paine, however, endeavours to avail himself of the most opposite sentiments for the purpose of exciting discontent. He first represents Government as unnecessary, in order, if possible, to make some of his readers indifferent to the preservation of that which actually exists; but lest he should fail in this attempt, he next appears the advocate for a regular constitution, and in this character, in order to take another chance of raising dissatisfaction, he gravely asserts, that in this country, notwithstanding all we see and feel, we have at this hour no Constitution at all! Why did he not at the same time tell us, that we have no showers and no sun-shine? Such an assertion would not be more contradictory to common sense and daily experience.

Mr. Paine vainly endeavours to fix an odium upon subsisting Governments by recalling to mind the temporary deviations from first principles

principles which occurred in early periods of our history. But the recollection of the Norman Tyranny, of the Forest Cruelties, and the Curfew Bell, serves, by way of contrast, to attach us the more firmly to the system of security we now enjoy against the repetition of such grievous oppressions. Our Constitution is not (as this writer would fain insinuate) founded on such a basis. We can trace its *stamina* much higher. The Norman Conquest did but retard its growth, and for a time check its principles from expanding; but did not destroy, or even ultimately weaken, the beneficial energy of those principles. Through the rapacity and oppressive despotism of the first Monarchs of that line, we can connect some of our dearest privileges with the names of an ALFRED and an EDWARD. Having by its native vigour recovered from a malady which seemed for a while to threaten its existence, the Constitution has since, from time to time, been deriving new accessions of strength; and we hardly know whether to admire most the beautiful simplicity it displayed in its infant state, or the value and importance of those advantages which it gradually obtained and secured, as circumstances pointed out their necessity. Even perfect as it may now appear, the time may come, when further improvements may be suggested by further experience. For who will say, that any human institution can be at any time at the *ne plus ultra* of perfection? Let us not, however, be insensible of the advantage, that, instead of having to subvert, abolish, or expunge, our pleasing task is to secure, to guard, to polish, and to beautify; and let us cautiously refrain from tampering with a system so admirable in theory, so excellent in practice. There is nothing, however valuable, that the injudicious meddler may not spoil; but what madness would it be to sacrifice, in one rash moment, all the advantages which have been obtained during a succession of ages; and, as our author advises, to "begin anew:" that is to say, to lose all the ground we have gained—to give up our hold of all that we possess—to part with the substance for the shadow—and to plunge from the happy state of Law and Liberty into the chaotic abyss of anarchy and confusion.

After his first assault on Government in general, and his absurd complaint of the entire want of a Constitution in Great Britain, our author proceeds to attack the existing Governments in the detail. And it seems that the Monarchical form excites his keenest vengeance. Nor is this much to be wondered at. For, besides that it is the most vigorous form in which Government can appear, and perhaps the only one which can effectually repress violence and outrage in any extensive community, Monarchy in this country is the principle which gives activity and energy to the whole system; and it is perhaps peculiarly obnoxious to such writers as these, because it is a part of the regal prerogative to be the fountain of justice, and the spring which puts the laws into execution. This is an unpardonable offence—and no pains are spared to represent Royalty as an odious and an useless institution, consisting merely of outward pomp and unnecessary parade, and attended with grievous and unprofitable expence. Endless charges are rung upon the absurdity of bestowing a Million a-year upon a single individual. Mr. Paine must have a very

very contemptible opinion of the understandings of Englishmen, if he thinks they can be imposed upon by such fallacious suggestions (reasonings they certainly are not). Does he conceive there is not sense enough in this country to discover that the yearly stipend he alludes to is paid, not to the man, but to the office—not as a sinecure gratuity, but for the most essential and important functions, by the exercise of which we are all benefited?—that it is not given to the individual for his own particular use, but entrusted to him, as the first Magistrate of the country, to be applied to the support of the various branches of executive Government, which are necessary for the administration of public affairs either at home or abroad? These expences are not merely personal to the King, nor are they confined to the support of a numerous family and an extensive household, and the maintenance of that external dignity which is connected with the discharge of the duties of his office, and is therefore more important to his subjects than himself. The same fund defrays the salaries of the Judges, and of the various other Officers of Justice—the appointments of Foreign Ambassadors—of the Officers of State—and of the persons who fill all the subordinate situations in the various and extensive departments of Government, as well as pensions to a large amount given either as a relief for distress, or as a reward for public services *. Although Mr. Paine may chuse to consider the Crown only as a “Metaphor shewn at the Tower for sixpence or a shilling a-piece,” we know and value the strength and vigour of our Monarchy; we feel that its interests are but reciprocal with those of the country; we esteem those useful and efficient prerogatives with which the Constitution has invested our King as a grand source, and as an essential security of our national consequence and felicity; and we see with admiration the exercise of those prerogatives so wisely and cautiously guarded as to render it impossible they should be abused to the detriment of our liberties. Accordingly, we are so far from grudging the liberal allowance which we present by our representatives, at the commencement of each reign, for the support of the regal dignity, as well as for the various charges on the Civil List, that we think no money can be better bestowed.

Another quality of the Monarchy which gives great offence to Mr. Paine, is its hereditary nature. This is equally easy to be accounted for. The bustle, the strife, the confusion, the intrigues, and the cabal, the plots, and the counter-plots, which are sure to attend the election of a King, would be replete with entertainment and gratification to those whose turn of mind or of politics leads them to favour such scenes. But those who prefer a tranquil instantaneous succession to a

* Before the present reign the fund appropriated to the Civil List was composed of divers hereditary branches of revenue, of an uncertain amount, but producing annually in the last reign almost a million. His present Majesty, soon after his accession, of his own accord, most liberally surrendered to the public use this hereditary and improving income, and agreed to accept, as his Civil List, the limited sum of 800,000*l.* which, proving inadequate, has since been augmented to 900,000*l.* per ann.; and the revenues that he has thus abandoned have since increased so much that they now produce upwards of 1,400,000*l.* annually. Thus, notwithstanding the great increase of every article of expence, and the proportionate diminution in the value of money, his present Majesty, with a very numerous family, has really a less income than was enjoyed by his Royal Grandfather, and the public has gained half a million per ann. by the above-mentioned disinterested conduct.

violent or bloody election—those who think a regular and uninterrupted continuation of the functions of Government preferable to their occasional suspension—those who had rather be governed by a Monarch in a course of descent from an ancient and beloved race, than by one imposed upon them by the strength or address of a party, or by force of arms (which must ever be the case in an elective Monarchy), such persons, I say, will rejoice in the hereditary nature of the Crown; not to mention that the convulsion necessarily produced by a regal election would disturb and unhinge the whole machine of the Constitution. The inconveniences to which our author refers as arising from the nonage, idiocy, or other incapacity of the person on whom a Crown may devolve in an invariable course of descent, cannot exist, where, as in this country, the power of Parliament extends to provide against such cases: and as to the objections which he urges against an hereditary succession to the Crown, on account of the possible prevalence of personal ambition, or of a tyrannical disposition, in the character of the reigning monarch, they are comparatively of little weight where the powers of the Crown are so limited by, so connected with, and so dependant upon, the other powers known to the Constitution of this country. At a time when the exercise of the kingly powers was free from those important checks which have been since interposed (for many of our most valued securities have been obtained within little more than a century), this nation proved that it was out of the power of the monarch to violate or alter the Constitution, and to diminish the Liberties of the People. In short, our monarchy, although in its principle hereditary, yet it is by no means indefeasibly so, there being a power in Parliament to pass over, for sufficient cause, an individual who may for any cause be evidently unfit to succeed; deviating, however, no further than necessity requires, from the strict line of succession. And however the exercise of despotism may tend to corrupt the heart or contract the understanding, the situation and the limited though respectable authority of a King of England are calculated to instil into his mind principles of public virtue, to form him to the habits of good government, to enlarge his understanding, to cultivate in him a regard for the real and permanent interests of his people, and to render him the most benevolent and useful of human beings, “a Patriot Prince!”

It must also be remarked, that the objections arising from the personal qualities of the Monarch are so far from being confined to hereditary succession, that they are in fact more likely to occur, and in no degree more easy to be guarded against, in elective monarchies. The experience of the world, corresponding with the nature of things, informs us, that the competition for a Crown has oftener been decided by force or intrigue, and by those qualities with which they are generally connected, than by the influence of personal merit; and that, whatever may be the fluctuations of character or talents in any particular family, hereditary succession is on the whole much more likely to furnish Sovereigns qualified and disposed to promote the happiness of their subjects, than the caprice, tumult, and disorder of popular election, where the contest is frequently decided by violence in favour of unprincipled ambition, or where those who are unable to govern, are often the only ones who are able to do so.

supporting some nominal Sovereign, whom, from his weakness and incapacity, they think themselves likely to govern.

Mr. Paine having laboured, though I trust very unsuccessfully, to create a prejudice against the Crown of this kingdom, he next endeavours, with much malignant scurrility, to seduce the affections of a loyal people from the Sovereign on the throne. He wishes to weaken the attachment subsisting between this Prince and his people, by representing the royal lineage as connected by very slender ties with the country, and as proceeding from a foreign stock, recently imported, by an injudicious choice, to govern a country to which it was before a stranger. How false, how insolent to Britons, are such insinuations! Does this vain and malevolent writer fancy it to be in his power to make us forget, that the Sovereign who is dear to our hearts, both for his personal virtues and for the attachment he has always shewn to the Constitution, is also the descendant of the Original Founder of the British Monarchy? The various channels through which the royal blood has flowed for nearly one thousand years, are at length happily united in an illustrious Protestant line; and the ancient Crown of this kingdom is now worn, with hereditary right, by a Prince, who, while he sits on the throne of his ancestors, reigns with more unlimited sway in the affections of his subjects.

Neither can it be in the power of wanton and licentious indecency to stifle our attachment to persons and families whose memory ought ever to be dear to Englishmen. It is not, surely, for malice and misrepresentation to make us forget, that the Houses of ORANGE and BRUNSWICK have rendered us essential services at critical times, and that to them, under Providence, we are indebted for the continued enjoyment of privileges which distinguish us from the rest of the world. Such names have been hitherto mentioned with veneration by our most ardent and enlightened patriots: such names will continue to be venerated by all who, being rationally as well as fervently attached to the Constitution itself, cannot remember with indifference those persons and families which have been the instruments of its preservation.

It may not be inapplicable here to observe, that nothing can be more different from a pure and generous spirit of real patriotism, than that coarse and illiberal disposition which delights in abuse and invective against all persons invested with power and authority. The former can even oppose with respect, and will render serious and determined resistance (should that ever become necessary for good purposes) more weighty and efficacious, by the dignified decency from which it never departs: the latter appears to place its principal gratification in railing against the higher powers: it seems to depend for personal consequence upon attacking the dignity of superiors: and wishes it to be considered as a proof of magnanimity and independent spirit, boldly to treat with gross scurrility characters and situations which the rest of the world look up to with respect: and, like the unblushing profligate, it delights to wound and to torture the feelings of those who retain a sense of propriety.

What can be more base and ungenerous than the disposition I allude to? The order of civil society (partaking of the invariable principle of nature itself) requires a progressive gradation: but the highest

ranks, exposed as they are by their elevation to the shafts of malice and envy, are little coveted by the unprejudiced philosophical mind, that justly appreciates the advantages and disadvantages of respective situations. The station of Royalty itself, with all the dazzling glare which surrounds it, is far from being enviable: arduous as it is elevated—the symbol of power, but clogged with restraints unknown to inferior rank—impeded in the enjoyment of numberless individual comforts—debarred even of some of the most common, and at the same time the most valuable privileges of nature—shackled with forms and ceremonies—conspicuous always by the blaze of its own rays, and precluded from the delicious gratifications that belong to seclusion and privacy—beset with anxious cares, and eminently exposed to calumny, to plots, and conspiracies—while the high and important office of King, for the sake of the public good, calls for such sacrifices from the Man, how unworthy and ungenerous must it be to delight in wounding his personal feelings, and in planting his Crown with additional thorns! How much more consistent with the duty as well as the interest of subjects, to alleviate his cares, and to smooth his rugged path by demonstrations of fidelity, loyalty, and affection! It is not by indulging such sentiments under a mild and a just Government, that we shall be either pledged or disposed to submit to oppression. The feeling, the generous, and the loyal character would be the most strenuous, and the most manly, in defence of its rights, and of those of the country at large. A nation so composed would be the last to be attacked, but would never be enslaved; for the rational loyalty of a free people is itself a bulwark of their freedom, and by uniting them closely together in one common sentiment, as well as one common interest, preserves concord and happiness at home, while it creates consequence and respectability abroad*.

It is one of the blessings of this country to have a monarch who reigns not only the King but the fond father of his people; while their cheerful and affectionate loyalty constitutes the happiness of his life, the chief glory of his Crown, and the strength, prosperity, and splendour of the nation.

And shall we, while the gloom, the dismay, and the universal stagnation, occasioned by the yet recent malady of our common Father are fresh in our recollection—while our hearts still vibrate with the transports of joy which assailed us on his welcome and almost unexpected recovery—shall we countenance the most audacious insults on his person, and the most malignant attacks upon his Crown? Or shall we demonstrate our attachment to himself and his family, by consigning the authors of such attempts to their proper station of contempt and infamy?

As the direct way to demolish any building is, Sampson-like, to pull down the pillars by which it is supported; in order to abolish Monarchy, it is found expedient to attack the aristocratical branch of

* In the year 1771, the Rev. Mr. HORNE expressed himself as follows: "I would offend the Sovereign with as much reluctance as the parent."—"Whoever or whatever is Sovereign, demands the respect and support of the people. The union is formed for their happiness, which cannot be had without mutual respect; and he counsels maliciously who would persuade either to a wanton breach of it."—It is to be hoped, that in 1792 JOHN HORNE TOOK, Esq. is under the influence of the same sentiments.

government*. Hence a violent outcry against orders of Nobility naturally forms a part of the system to the introduction of which Mr. Paine's writings are directed. He seems very desirous that his readers should consider the rank of Nobility as consisting merely in a frivolous exterior distinction, in "ribbands, garters, and nick-names †;" another insult on the understanding and experience of Englishmen; who know, by the aid of both, that a mixed Government and limited Monarchy require not only a gradation of rank, but also an intermediate legislative order, interposed between the Monarch and the popular representative, which, depending for its own preservation on that of the other two branches, is rendered thereby the natural guardian of both, and an insuperable barrier against the encroachment of either.

The people of this country are by no means such superficial observers as Mr. Paine supposes or wishes them to be.—Far from confining their attention to externals, they can see that the pomp and splendour annexed to the rank of English Nobility, are but appendages to a high situation and to important public duties both of the legislative and judicial kind. Such a situation and such duties should surely be ever accompanied with something to impress the senses: for it is not in the nature of man to be always engaged in abstract operations. Nor is this Order, with us, possessed of any peculiar privileges, but such as are requisite for the free and beneficial exercise of those functions, which it possesses for the good of the whole. In every other respect, the Peer and the Peasant are under the equal administration of equal laws, which know not any difference between them in regard to those important rights which are founded in nature, and to secure which is the grand object of society.

From such a community of interest with persons of this elevated station, who would be equally injured with ourselves by any infringement on the rights of the subject, we derive an important additional security for the preservation of our liberties. And thus the Peers of Great Britain, though not actually deputed, do virtually possess a representative character, obliging them cautiously and firmly to protect those rights which they enjoy in common, and which they can enjoy only in common with the People at large; while the existence of such a rank in the State, besides its other advantages, is conducive to the promotion of a spirit of virtuous enterprize and of honourable emulation; and its hereditary nature is necessary both to render it independent of the Crown, and to insure its stability and its permanence.

Mr. Paine, in his endeavours to create a prejudice against Monarchy and Aristocracy, retails very artfully the common-place topics of objection to which each is liable in its simple form; and he as artfully avoids all mention of the disadvantages attending a Government consisting solely of a Democratic representation. But it might not be unfair to ask him, Whether in that beverage of which perhaps his libations are sometimes composed, he finds that the spirit and the

* Thus, in the last century, when a small portion of the Commons, by the aid of military force, had usurped the supreme power, covering their designs under the stale, and generally false pretext of the authority of the People, they still found that the existence of a House of Peers, disheartened and almost deserted as that assembly then was, formed nevertheless a barrier to the completion of their crimes;—and accordingly they thought it necessary

limpid element, the sweet and the acid ingredients, do each retain the same precise properties when combined together, which they severally possessed in their separate and independent state? or, Whether they are not blended that each may modify and correct the other, and that a new and agreeable effect may be produced from the union? The allusion is a very familiar one, but I hope excusable if found to be apposite. The Government of this country is compounded of those three forms in which alone Government has ever appeared, and which have ever proved highly objectionable in their separate exercise; but, by blending them together in wise proportions, it secures the advantages of each, while it escapes the inconveniences which they are calculated to produce. It is this union which has caused the happiness and splendour of Great Britain, and which affords a solid and permanent basis for the freedom of its inhabitants: it is this assemblage which has attracted the admiration of the world, and called forth the applauses of those who have been most distinguished for their talents and powers of discrimination.

One of the greatest Political Characters of the present age, whose talents at least nobody will dispute, and who from his recent conduct seems inclined to push his notions of Liberty at least sufficiently far, thought it nevertheless necessary to vindicate himself from the suspicion of not affording his entire approbation to that mixture of forms which constitutes the British Government: and in a discussion on the Quebec Bill, in the course of the last Session, he stated it to be his decided opinion, that every simple form of Government, whether Monarchy, Aristocracy, or Democracy, was essentially bad; and that there could be no good or complete system of Government without a proper mixture of all three. Such, he observed, had always been his sentiments; and whoever thought otherwise of him, had been mistaken; especially if they thought he was an enemy to Aristocracy: the direct contrary was the fact; and there was no man in that House who considered a proper and well-regulated Aristocracy, *such as formed a part of the British Constitution*, more essential to the formation of a good Government than he did; that a certain degree of Aristocracy was absolutely necessary as a poise between the prerogative of the Crown acting against the rights of the People, and the influence and liberty of the People acting against the Monarchical power; and that therefore a mixture so constituted that each was a check upon the other, he conceived to be the Constitution of this country, and the best Constitution in the world*.

Nor was the testimony of the most enlightened of the Ancients wanting in favour of such a system of Government, in point of principle, long before it was ever reduced into practice. Thus Tacitus regarded the triple form as highly deserving of admiration; but as he could only view it in theory, it appeared to him rather to be coveted and admired than likely to be effected; and as a degree of perfection in Government not likely to be either attained or preserved in practice†. Our long experience has, however, proved that his apprehensions in

* See Mr. Fox's Speech on the Quebec Bill.

† Cunctas nationes et urbes, populos, aut priores, aut singuli regunt; dilecta ex his et constituta Reipublicæ forma LAUDARI facilius quam evenire; si evenit haud diuturna esse potest.

these respects were unfounded, and in all other respects has confirmed his opinion. Cicero also expressly describes a Constitution similar to ours, though he had never seen it realized, as the most perfect that could be supposed to exist; and he bestows upon it his unqualified applause in terms remarkably apposite and descriptive*. I might also adduce other testimonies from ancient wisdom to the same purport, were it at all necessary.

It is unnecessary to dwell longer on particular objections, which, when thoroughly understood, are not pointed so much to the abstract nature of particular forms of Government, as to the existence of any Government at all; so that whatever form might be substituted, if it were efficacious, and capable of answering the purposes for which all Governments are established, the same dissatisfaction and the same cavil would ensue: all the old, that is, all the subsisting and long-established Governments are condemned in the lump; and what is called "the new representative system engrafted on Democracy" is stated to be the only good plan of Government. But where upon the whole surface of the Globe is this plan reduced into practice? Where does it now exist, except in our author's brain? for, according to him, it "rejects Monarchy both elective and hereditary." It must also, I presume, reject Aristocracy, to which he ascribes in substance "the same vices and defects" as to Monarchy. Therefore, upon Mr. Paine's own principles, even the form of Government traced out by the New Constitution of France†, as well as that now existing in America, must be radically bad, as being inconsistent with his "new (fangled) representative system." For in the former, hereditary Monarchy is still professed to be interwoven, though, for want of an aristocratical branch, it has been already so much encroached upon, as to be useless to any salutary purpose; and the latter country, after a trial for several years of the pure democratical representative system, has found it necessary to adopt both Monarchy and Aristocracy: for the President, under that denomination, is invested with monarchical prerogatives;

* Statuo esse optimè constitutam rempublicam, quæ ex tribus generibus illis, regali optimo et populari, modice confusa. . . .

† With respect to the French Revolution, which, with all its train of calamities, Mr. Paine would, doubtless, be glad to see imitated in this country, the People of Great Britain, happy, successful, and flourishing in their own concerns, have nothing more to do with that event, than as a matter of distant, though interesting observation. The miserable and distracted state to which it has brought a once great and flourishing kingdom, far from being calculated to recommend the experiment of Revolutions, even in those countries where Despotism still maintains its sway, serves as a beacon to warn mankind of the danger of rash innovation, of mad reform, and of visionary plans of Government. With regard to ourselves, its peculiar operation should be to make us prize still more highly the system of Liberty and of Law, which is secured to us by our own excellent Constitution. The generous sympathy of the English character cannot however but be called forth into emotions of pity and commiseration, when we behold the extreme confusion, anarchy, and wretchedness, to which, in so short a time, our ancient rivals have been reduced; on whom misfortunes, if possible, still more severe seem to impend. But while we thus feelingly and sincerely lament the distresses of our neighbours;—and while with moderation we are improving those fair advantages which unavoidably result to ourselves from their calamitous condition; we should surely be induced by such considerations both to exercise redoubled care in preserving, and also to enjoy with increased thankfulness, that serene and prosperous tranquility, foreign and domestic, with which Providence seems disposed to bless this favoured Isle,

and

and the Senate constitutes a Middle Chamber: so that even American experience contradicts all Mr. Paine's notions of Government.*

Nor is it probable, that the New Constitution of Poland will better accord with our Author's sentiments; for the Crown of that country, from being elective, has thereby been rendered hereditary, and its prerogatives have been strengthened and enlarged: and what is perhaps *worst of all*, this change has been brought about without any infringement of order and public tranquillity. It should seem, therefore, that none either of the old or of the new Governments can afford any gratification to Mr. Paine's fastidious palate! But in seven years the scene is to be entirely changed; for that is the utmost period allowed by his prophetic spirit, "for the continuance of Monarchy or Aristocracy in any of the enlightened countries of Europe."

If Mr. Paine and his advocates should still contend, that his system does not go the full length of absolutely excluding every kind of Government, it would be well if they would agree on the proper denomination of that species of Government which his principles tend to establish. Perhaps if any term can be found to describe it, none will accord better than the familiar and homely appellation of *Mob Government*. If the Supreme Authority, appearing in this shape, assume the name of *Freedom*, it is entitled to do so only because it leaves people *free* to do all the mischief they please, and restrains them merely from doing good.—It abolishes all subsisting laws without the delay of a formal repeal; and in lieu of a regular and extensive system, nicely adjusted and calmly applied to almost every case that can be the subject of legal reference, or that can occur in improved and civilized Society, it substitutes the caprice and violence of the multitude, and thereby supersedes all the regular forms of justice. In other words, it rules by that species of law which is usually called the "law of the strongest:" a law which, whenever it is exercised, abrogates every other, demolishes at once all the powers, establishments, and institutions which were before recognized, and suddenly lays in ruins the former Government, and the entire Constitution itself.

In a *political* view, this system of Government violates and dissolves all the foreign connections and engagements which nations have formed for their mutual security, and breaks through every obligation of treaty. The law of nations is held no more sacred than the law of the land; and while the public faith is broken, the honour of the country is tarnished, its weight and respectability diminished, and its commerce and revenues annihilated.

In a *domestic* view, under such a system, all orders will be levelled—all distinctions effaced—the rights of property (formerly held sacred)

* AMERICA, during the short period since the establishment of her Independence, has found, that the democratic form was not calculated for the government of three millions of people, though spread over so immense a territory; and in the year 1787 she new-modelled her Constitution, assimilating it, as nearly as circumstances would allow, to that of Great Britain, by adopting the triple form of Government. In respect to the Monarchical party, it was to be expected that, like many other new States, she would at first fill that office by election; and the General under whose conduct success had crowned a long and bloody war, was, according to all human experience, the natural object of universal and peaceful choice. But when no such source of general agreement shall exist, and when various claimants, prompted by ambition, shall be supported by clashing interests, the Crown of America, should it continue to preserve its unity, will probably become hereditary.

angulled, and security and tranquillity made to depend on the capricious will of an unrestrained multitude.

In a *moral* view, all those obligations which have been hitherto considered as sacred and inviolable will be cancelled. The natural love of our country, together with all sense of duty and gratitude to the state, which protected the otherwise defenceless moments of birth and infancy, will be extirpated—and an attachment to our native soil will no longer prevail. The useful impulses of parental affection and filial duty, of conjugal love, fraternal regard, and friendly attachment, and all the ties which had before connected man with man, and rendered them mutually subservient to each other's felicity, all these will give way before a mad and unbridled licentiousness—heating the imagination, intoxicating the mind, inflaming the passions, and corrupting the heart.

In a *philosophical* view, civilization, which had arrived at a high degree of perfection under the genial influence of settled government and certain laws, will recede much more rapidly than it had advanced. The decline of literature, the extinction of the arts and sciences, must surely follow, when the supreme power is in the hands of the illiterate Many; before whose Gothic ravages the monuments of fame and merit, the depositaries of learning, and the archives of science, will speedily disappear. The gloom of night will then again succeed to the splendor of day; barbarism will revive; and a new age of romantic chivalry will be wanted, as the harbinger and the instrument of a more perfect civilization.

Such would be the effects of a Government founded upon Mr. Paine's principles. But it is plain that human nature cannot long subsist in a state so little calculated to provide for its wants and necessities. Therefore the Government of the Mob, destructive as it is despotic, is necessarily of very short duration. The bulk of the people soon become weary of a condition of such restlessness, and pant for quiet and tranquillity. They find that their causes of complaint (whether real or imaginary) are alarmingly increased; their difficulties greatly augmented, their resources in proportion diminished, and their enjoyments, their means of subsistence, nay, even the recompence for bodily labour, and handicraft skill, become, like every thing else, precarious and insecure. At length, some new combination of power, prompted by ambition, and probably supported by those who were foremost in the subversion of order and in the clamour for "rights," takes advantage of the harrassed and enfeebled condition of the country; and after meeting with more or less resistance, according to the strength or weakness of contending cabals, assumes to itself unlimited dominion; to preserve which, it must exert the most absolute and despotic powers, and rule with a rod of iron. The people, in the mean time, suffering from the ravages of such a convulsion, are reduced to submit to a new and galling yoke, which is better only than an entire absence of all regular Government. Farther than ever from obtaining the privileges held out to them, they find themselves destitute even of those which they had before possessed; and, having relinquished a state of real comfort and happiness, they at length, after a long and calamitous struggle, sink into a miserable and disgraceful servitude.

What a pleasing contrast to such dreadful scenes, is to be found in

the happy state of this country, where, instead of an ungovernable spirit of licentiousness, inspiring terror throughout the land, and making itself known by its excesses, we see the effects of genuine Liberty operating as a real, an universal, and a permanent blessing---founded in law---the equal and inviolable birthright of every individual---giving a manliness and an energy to the national character, and being the source as well as the security of our greatness, prosperity, and happiness as a people. Who is there, of the most clamorous assertors of pretended rights, that will point out an instance in which the liberty of a single individual can be illegally invaded in this country? Where is the power that can deprive the British subject of the protection of the laws? And shall we listen with complacency to those who counsel us to exchange this state of mild and rational freedom and of tranquil happiness for savage ferociousness, intestine dissensions, and outrageous violence? Shall we clasp the demon of discord to our breasts, even while the fiend is waving the torch of sedition? No! let us rather shew ourselves deserving of the name and of the privileges of Englishmen, not only by a resolute defence of our glorious Constitution itself, but by a marked indignation against those who treat it with insult, or aim at its subversion.

It is one of our peculiar and most estimable advantages to possess legal, orderly, and constitutional means for the correction as well as the prevention of abuses; and thereby every motive for violence is obviated, and every excuse for disorder taken away. While true to ourselves, we are invulnerable. Our grand and constant object should be to preserve and enforce the true *spirit* of the Constitution, and we should resort to *that* alone for an explanation of our rights; regarding it as our Polar star, not only to direct and regulate in all cases of difficulty and danger, but to be our constant and invariable guide through every part of our political course. We should cautiously guard and preserve the constitutional independence of each distinct part of our government, and consider every infringement upon any of their regular functions (whether deliberative or executive) as deranging the balance, and as tending to the destruction of the whole machine. Above all, we should be both vigilant and honest in the exercise of the important duties of electors; and by observing and enforcing the many salutary regulations which the Legislature has interposed to check the too prevalent spirit of bribery and corruption, we should do all in our power to preserve the purity and independence of the popular part of our Government. And if, in spite of all our care, evils and abuses should creep in, we should resort to constitutional remedies alone for their correction; and consider as our worst foes all who advise the application of any means which are not so authorized and prescribed.

It may also be of use to bear in mind, that the best of all possible institutions, operating upon a subject so defective as human nature, must ever in point of practice fall short of absolute theoretical perfection. Such a consideration will not only preserve us from visionary and romantic wishes for what is really unattainable (than which nothing can more pervert the proper and useful bias of the mind), but it will also guide to the real source of defects, and to the most natural means both of preventing and of counteracting them. Nothing can be more obvious, than that the beneficial energy even of our own ex-

cellent Constitution will even be checked, in proportion to the prevalence of dissipation and depravity in the manners and in the minds of the people. Instead, therefore, of imputing blame where none is deserved, let us trace evils to their actual cause, and there apply the remedy. Let every real friend to his Country and its Constitution do all in his power, by precept and by example, to inculcate and recommend a spirit of order, oeconomy, temperance, and industry, and the practice of those duties which are prescribed by morality and religion.—Let him resist as much as he can the increase of luxury and dissipation, which enervate the mind, degrade the character, disqualify for manly and noble exertions, and open all the sources of corruption.—Let him, in short, exert himself in aid of magistracy and the police to check the baneful contagion of vice and immorality, remembering that an independence of mind, so congenial to freedom, is also nearly allied to purity and simplicity of manners.—While the Throne exhibits so excellent a pattern of all the virtues which ornament humanity and benefit mankind, how should the influence of the bright and useful example be communicated from rank to rank, till it pervade the utmost recesses of society!—Then, indeed, would civil liberty be invigorated and adorned by private virtue and domestic happiness.

I am not now affecting to sermonize, or even to moralize—I am viewing the matter in a *political* light only.—The *moral* and *religious* display of these topics is the peculiar province of the *pulpit*. But their *civil* importance calls for the attention of the statesman, the philanthropist, and the citizen. It is possible that the depraved manners of a people may not only endanger their freedom, but render it a curse instead of a blessing—and liberty, by degenerating into licentiousness, becomes its own certain destroyer. But without carrying our apprehensions so far, it is a truth which concerns us most nearly, and which cannot be too often repeated, that the benefits derived from our CONSTITUTION will exist in greater or less perfection, in proportion to the prevalence of a virtuous principle among ourselves: those, therefore, who wish for the continued and complete enjoyment of that great and invaluable blessing will neglect nothing that can tend to preserve it in purity and vigour, to enforce its true spirit, or to promote the genuine operation of its salutary influence.—They will venerate it themselves, and recommend it by their own example to the veneration of others.—They will inculcate in their children an early and habitual acquaintance with its history, its nature, and its excellencies, together with a steady and rational attachment to its principles.—They will support it, at all times, by a firm and resolute, though a decent and orderly adherence; knowing that irregularity and violence would involve a direct violation of its spirit: and they will, if occasion should require, be ready with cheerfulness to risk their lives in its defence.

So shall the BRITISH CONSTITUTION, the suitable and happy portion of those who deserve to be free, remain firm, immovable, and unimpaired for succeeding ages; secure against the attacks of visionary theorists and of wicked incendiaries; and uniting within itself the security and energy of a well-regulated Government, and the utmost attainable degree of real political LIBERTY.

THE END.